

REMARKS

Claims 1-22 are currently pending in the present application, with Claims 1, 2, 4-10 being amended, and Claims 3 and 17-22 being canceled. Reconsideration and reexamination of the claims are respectfully requested.

The Examiner objected to the Abstract of disclosure; Applicants have amended the Abstract and respectfully submit that the amended Abstract is compliant with all formal requirements.

The Examiner objected to claims 7 and 20 for reasons of informality. Applicants have amended Claims 7 and 20, and respectfully submit that the claims are in compliance with all formal requirements.

The Examiner rejected Claims 1, 4-19, and 21-22 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Jones (U.S. Patent No. 5,412,730). This rejection is moot with respect to the canceled claims and respectfully traversed with respect to the amended claims.

The present invention is directed to a secured cryptographic communications system in which the communication nodes of the system include a pseudo-random key generator for generating pseudo-random keys that can be used to encrypt/decrypt communication data. Because the cryptographic keys can be generated locally at each communication node, the keys need not be transported between the communication nodes and hence the communication system is not susceptible to compromise via interception of keys. In accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention, a cryptographic key based on pseudo-randomly generated numbers are provided once every key change period, starting from a predetermined reference initialization value (referred to as the crypto midnight date and time value in the specification).

In order to ensure that the pseudo-random key generators are providing the same keys at the same time, the pseudo-random key generators are initiated at the same exact time and are preferably periodically synchronized with each other thereafter. However, in reality, it is impractical to initialize the different units of pseudo-random key generators at the exact same time, especially if the units are located in different parts of the world. Although it is possible for